

Town of Groton, Vermont – Select Board Minutes of June 7, 2018 (approved)

Select Board Members in Attendance: Wade Johnson, Sr., Deborah Jurist and Aaron Smith

Attendance for the meeting included: Debra Johnson, Lisa Hart, Mark Shallberg, Lise' Shallberg, Brent Smith, James Downing, Dan Webster, Shaun Stetson, Jodi Fleurie-Wohlleb, Jim Burke, Nathan Puffer, Kristian Connolly, Brent Abare, Greg Western and Dorothy Knott.

Wade called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

Deborah made a motion to accept the minutes of May 17, 2018, Aaron seconded, motion passed.

Adjustments to Agenda

After the discussion on the basketball hoop add the PACIF Insurance follow up items.

Greg Western – agreement for Select Board to sign

The Select Board signed the Cross VT Trail Association License Agreement.

BMU School Board Directors – to discuss merger, Brent Abare

Brent Abare is one of the Blue Mountain Union School Board members who were invited by the Groton Select Board to come to this Select Board meeting to update the town on what is happening with Act 46. Mr. Abare handed out a summary of what he was going to be presenting.

Brent Abare brought grave concerns about the future for Groton's children because of the decision by the Secretary of Education to close the BMU Highschool and enroll the students into Oxbow. Mr. Abare also laid out what the future of Blue Mountain Union School K through 8 might look like and why Groton residents need to be very concerned. If Groton residents want more information on what was presented at the meeting, a copy of the handout that Brent Abare spoke about will be behind the Select Board minutes at the Groton Town Office.

Nathan Puffer – agreement from lawyer

Lisa had emailed the Select Board a copy of the agreement from the lawyer. This agreement includes the termination of the right of way and grant the new utility easement to the town. The change that was made was due to Brent Smith and Nathan Puffer going to the site to do some measuring.

Deborah made a motion to approve Nathan Puffer's right-of-way transaction, Aaron seconded, motion passed.

Since Nathan Puffer was at the meeting and Groton Timberworks was involved with the basketball hoop, the discussion on the basketball hoop was moved up on the agenda.

Discussion on Basketball Hoop

Deborah and Wade Johnson both attended the Groton Community Club meeting during which the basketball hoop was discussed. It was decided at the meeting that Peter Lyon, Wade Johnson, Sr., Groton Timberworks, Lajeunesse and possible DeWolfe Engineering would meet to come up with a plan which would not rely on grant money. Since the grant was awarded in Sept. of 2017 and becomes unavailable in Sept. of 2018, and there is no functional plan to install the retractable basketball hoop, given the discrepancy in measurements. They have not met yet. The Select Board wants other options for a basketball hoop and that it will be done with the money that already has been raised, since the availability of the grant ends in 4 months, none of the forms have been filled for the grant, and there are problems with the plan for a retractable backboard. It was discussed at the Community Club meeting that Lajeunesse has been given \$1500 (from the Recreation Committee) and the town could get that back. Wade will be calling Lajeunesse to see what is going on with the basketball hoop. Deborah made a motion that the town will only spend \$1500 that was already issued on the basketball hoop, Aaron seconded, motion passed. Aaron said that if Wade doesn't get anywhere with Lajeunesse, then at the next Select Board meeting, the decision will be made to take the basketball hoop down. The insurance company says the basketball hoop is a liability.

Highway/Brent Smith

Brent said the Minard Hill project should be starting on June 18th.

Admin. Asst./Lise – updates, estimate from Matt Puffer on Edwards

The letter that Lise wrote to send to Rubin concerning his 938 acres was signed by the Select Board.

Lise got the estimate for Matt Puffer Excavation to take down the Edwards house which is \$2000. Lise asked Dan Webster if the burned down house is a true health hazard. Dan's answer was a definite YES.

Aaron made a motion to take the \$2000 from the Emergency Fund to pay for Matt Puffer's work on the Edwards property, Deborah seconded. The motion was tabled so Lisa Hart could check on the how the Emergency Fund in Reserves can be used.

Lise went over the rest of the mail that she had.

2nd Constable – his duties

Shaun Stetson said that his plans are now to take the Constable courses the spring of 2019.

Aaron made a motion that the Town of Groton adopt the VT state statutes that apply for an uncertified constable, Deborah seconded, motion passed.

Library Trustees – budget (spending)

There was discussion on whether or not the Groton Library is a municipal or private library. Lisa asked the auditors (Fothergill Segale & Valley) that were in the office today (Thursday, June 7) to look further into the library funds.

Dan Webster spoke up and said he is working with Bob Hanson from Rural Edge who was involved back in 2004 at the beginning of the process with Gilman Housing.

Adopt updated Personnel Policy/Conflict of Interest Policy

This will be put on the agenda for the next meeting.

PACIF Insurance Policy

Two issues on this policy are the basketball hoop and the moving of the bell. The issue of the basketball hoop is being worked on.

Deborah made a motion to request Mark Shallberg to give the Select Board the cost of moving the bell as instructed by the insurance, Aaron seconded, motion passed.

Lisa said there were a few things that were on the list to do this spring.

Mark Shallberg brought up the hand railing out front need to be replaced with metal railings.

The Select Board gave Mark Shallberg the permission to replace the railings.

Financials/Lisa

Lisa handed out the budgets which are at 42% for the Select Board to review. Lisa also gives a copy to all department heads of their updated budgets each month.

Lisa had a question on what budget line to pay the \$500 for the appraisal on the Cilley property.

Lisa suggested taking it from the Miscellaneous Expense Budget Line. It was approved by the Select Board to take the \$500 from the Miscellaneous Expense Budget Line for the appraisal of the Cilley property.

Lisa said she met with the auditors (Fothergill Segale & Valley) today. The Auditors spoke with selected Department Heads privately. Lisa said the 1st day went well with the Field Work. A suggestion was made by the auditors of having additional monthly statements emailed to one of the Select Board members to review. The Select Board decided to have Aaron Smith be the Select Board member to receive these statements.

Brent Smith made a suggestion that the Select Board could appoint an individual to review the bank statements, not necessarily a Select Board member. This position will be appointed by the Select Board after the next Town Meeting in March of 2019.

Lisa said the Certificate of Insurance was received from Frigon Cleaning with the Town of Groton added at the bottom. Frigon Cleaning's liability amount was still at \$600,000. Lisa said if the Select Board agrees to sign the contract with the \$600,000, then she has written a letter to cover herself since she has told the Select Board about the million-dollar liability that PACIF asks for.

Lisa discussed the loan that was given to Donald Bliss, which was for \$2500 in 2012. He is supposed to pay \$25 a month and doesn't consistently pay this. Lisa is going to give him a copy of what he owes and a new payment schedule which needs to be paid up by January of 2021. Lisa had a question on the Tree Warden's mileage sheet that he submitted. There is no mileage in the Tree Warden's budget. The Select Board decided that mileage is included in his stipend. Lisa asked about where in the budget the reappraisal expenses are to come from. The Select Board decided all expenses from the reappraisal should come from the Reappraisal Reserve Fund.

Executive Session – Real Estate Matter

There is no need to have the executive session.

Open to Public & Other Business

Dan Webster said the state is not going to move Mace's cars. Dan mentioned there was a sewer break in the Groton General Store area of Gilman Housing. There were several things found. One was a septic system was below a leach field. A pipe coming from the General Store was found out to be put in backwards. There were also issues with the power. These issues have all been fixed.

Dan also found an ordinance that Hardwick, Plainfield and Williamstown have adopted pertaining to solid waste, garbage, junk, junk motor vehicles and trash. This will be put on the next Select Board agenda to discuss more. Lise is to review the process for passing an ordinance.

Dorothy said the listers have set up grievances for June 15th and 16th. Notices for the reappraisals were mailed out. The reappraisal will start in July.

Jim Downing said he will be taking the cruiser into the garage for body work that was in this year's budget to be done.

Jim Downing and Shaun Stetson suggested having a reserve fund for a new cruiser in the future.

There was discussion on what to do about the information that Brent Abare discussed earlier about Act 46. The Select Board decided to have a Select Board meeting on Thursday, June 14, 2018 at 6:30 PM to have all the School Board Members come and Groton residents. This Select Board meeting will be advertised in the Bridge Weekly next week.

Sign Orders

Orders were signed.

Set Agenda for next Select Board meeting on June 21, 2018

Meeting called to order

Review/Approve Minutes of June 7, 2018

Adjustments to Agenda

Nathan Puffer – agreement from lawyer for SB to sign
Department Updates
Highway/Brent Smith
Admin. Asst./Lise – updates,
Adopt updated Personnel Policy/Conflict of Interest Policy
Discussion on Basketball Hoop
Discuss Civil Ordinance for solid waste, garbage, junk, junk motor vehicles and trash
Financials/Lisa – Emergency Fund – Edwards Building demolition
Executive Session – Real Estate Matter
Open to Public & Other Business
Sign Orders
Set Agenda for next Select Board meeting on July 5, 2018
Adjourn
To Do List – PACIF Insurance Policy

Deborah made a motion to adjourn at 9:40 PM, Aaron seconded, motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,
Debra Johnson
SB Secretary

Wade Johnson, Sr., Chair

Deborah Jurist

Aaron Smith